

Draft - 26 August 1953

Dear Senator Mansfield:

In Mr. Dulles' absence from the country, I am taking the liberty of replying to your letter of 25 August 1953 regarding CIA relations with the Congress. The answers below are numbered in accordance with the numbers of the questions in your letter.

1. a. CIA representatives have appeared on Agency business before the following Senate Committees:

- Armed Services
- Government Operations (Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations)
- Judiciary
 - (Immigration Subcommittee)
 - (Internal Security Subcommittee)

Agency representatives have appeared before the following House Committees:

- Armed Services
- Foreign Affairs
- Government Operations
- Un-American Activities.

Agency representatives also have appeared before the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy and liaison is maintained with the Joint Committee on Printing.

Detailed briefings on CIA activities are given to special subcommittees of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees and have been given to the Armed Services Committees of both Houses. In addition, in the field of ~~the~~ atomic energy, the Joint Committee is regularly advised of CIA's activities in this field.

CIA legislation was handled by the Armed Services Committees in both Houses.

The CIA appropriation figure is very tightly held and is known to not more than five or six members in each House.

1. b. The only Committee which receives intelligence reports from CIA on a regular basis is the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. The Agency is also of assistance in making certain information available to the Immigration Subcommittees of the Judiciary Committees of both Houses, and has also been of some assistance to the Internal Security Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary. Intelligence reports are not made available merely to support the position of another Executive agency.

2. The Central Intelligence Agency feels that the present ties with Congress are adequate. As far as we are able to determine, these ties are stronger than those which exist between any other nation's intelligence service and the legislative body of any other country.

This Agency does not favor the creation of a Joint Committee on Central Intelligence similar to the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. The reasons which led to the creation of the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy are quite different from those which would support a Joint Committee on Central Intelligence. The Atomic Energy Commission not only administers all of the atomic energy programs of the United States, but is also a policy making group in a field which, through its military and peace-time applications, can affect the lives not only of ~~xxx~~ every citizen in the United States, but ultimately every person in the world. Both domestic and international problems are involved, as well as relationships with private citizen in such fields as patents and property. There are problems arising out of the control of materials and judicial penalties for violations. In short, the public interest is involved in almost every action which is taken in the field of atomic energy, and insofar as the public interest is involved, the Legislative Branch has a strong co-relative responsibility with the Executive. The special security problems of atomic energy are generally limited to a comparatively small area of the field and largely fall into the category of military applications.

There is a basic difference between the field of intelligence and that of atomic energy. In its intimate relation to the conduct of international relations, intelligence is primarily the concern of the

Executive Branch of the Government. CIA is prohibited by law from any functions involving internal security, and therefore its actions normally do not affect U. S. citizens directly. The Central Intelligence Agency is not a policy making organization. Its duty is to develop and evaluate objectively facts upon which policy can be based.

The intelligence estimates of this Agency are one element for consideration in policy decisions by the Executive Branch, but considered alone would not adequately reveal the basis for such decisions. Thus rather than cementing relations with the Legislative Branch, access to estimates by a Joint Committee would tend to be a source of friction.

As you know, intelligence material is handled on a "need to know" basis. A Joint Committee, particularly one as large as is envisaged by the current proposals, raises serious problems of security, in that it will add additional people to those members of the Congress who must continue to be informed on intelligence matters. In addition, many of the operations conducted by this Agency

are done at the direction of the National Security Council and the continued and detailed scrutiny of these operations could entail the substitution of the judgment of the Joint Committee for that of the National Security Council in fields which are traditionally those of the Executive.

By the above comments I do not wish to lead you to believe that we feel in any way that this Agency is not responsible to the Congress which has placed the greatest trust in us and given us great and economic support in our statutory authority. It is my belief that a Joint Committee such as is currently proposed would be too inflexible a group for the purposes desired. It would be highly preferable if Congressional supervision of CIA were left in the hands of the Appropriations Committees insofar as budgetary requirements are concerned, and in the Armed Services Committees insofar as legislation is concerned. It would certainly be proper if from time to time subcommittees of the Armed Services Committees of both Houses of the Congress were to make a general survey of the activities of this Agency. We do not consider ourselves immune from such a survey in any respect. As an alternative it may be that the Vice President and the Speaker may wish to appoint an ad hoc

group to look into the entire situation at the present time, but for reasons of security it would appear that such a group should consist of no more than three members from each House.

It should be noted also that the Central Intelligence Agency is the apex of the intelligence community in the Government, and it draws very heavily upon the intelligence organizations of the Department of State and the Army, Navy and Air Force. It also maintains the closest liaison with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the heads of these intelligence organizations, together with the Chief of Intelligence of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Director of the Joint Staff of the Joint Chiefs of Staff sit at least once a week as the Intelligence Advisory Committee under the Chairmanship of the Director of Central Intelligence and pass upon the final versions of national intelligence estimates and other pertinent problems in the intelligence field. Thus, the full power of the entire intelligence community is brought to bear on the consideration of intelligence problems. Thus, a joint Committee which dealt only with Central Intelligence would be surveying only a portion of the picture.

3. At about the same time as the Hoover Commission Subcommittee was making its study of intelligence, a special group appointed by the President, consisting of Mr. Allen Dulles, Mr.

William H. Jackson, and Mr. Matthias F. Correa, were requested by the President to make a detailed survey of CIA. At the time of the survey these men were all in private life. Many of their recommendations, as well as those of the Hoover Commission, were carried into effect and were largely implemented upon the advent of General Smith as Director in October 1950 and Mr. Jackson as Deputy Director. This implementation has been carried forth by Mr. Dulles, who succeeded Mr. Jackson as Deputy Director, and while it is safe to say that no intelligence organization is ever completely satisfied with the quality of ~~its~~ its end product, nevertheless, we feel and have been informed by impartial observers that the organization and the end product has been continuously and vigorously improved.

Needless to say, I would be happy to discuss this entire problem with you in great detail at your convenience.

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Dear Senator Mansfield:

In the absence of Mr. Dulles, who is out of the country at the present time, I am taking the liberty of acknowledging your letter of 25 August 1953 regarding your bill to establish a Joint Congressional Committee on Intelligence.

The questions which you have raised in your letter are of such a nature that I know Mr. Dulles will wish to give them his personal attention. As he is returning on 8 September, I am sure that you will concur in our desire to withhold a detailed reply to your letter until he returns.

Sincerely yours,